

Dance is a force for joy in the world!

**USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center,
New home of the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance,
Ribbon-Cutting on Wednesday, October 5, 2016**

First new school at USC in almost four decades

USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center, officially opening October 5, 2016, will house the new USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance (USC Kaufman), the first new school to be established at the University of Southern California in almost four decades.

The Glorya International Kaufman Dance Center is a brick-and-mortar celebration of dance and movement, giving the new school's leaders Dean Robert Cutietta and Vice Dean and Director Jodie Gates a unique opportunity to rethink the vision of a professional dance degree and build a diverse, flexible, globally-minded curriculum unencumbered by previous outdated requirements.

Founded in 2012 by a transformational gift from arts and dance philanthropist Glorya Kaufman, USC Kaufman welcomed its first class of carefully selected students in fall 2015 and welcomes its second this fall, just as the Kaufman Dance Center is set to open.

The new building, conceived through brainstorming sessions between Cutietta, Gates, and Kaufman, along with Pfeiffer Partners Architects, is a 70-foot tall, and more than 54,000 square foot physical representation of the essence of USC Kaufman.

Dean Cutietta said, "We believe that a lifelong career in dance can begin here, and to that end we are creating a visionary school that will be at the forefront of developing dancers, choreographers and dance leaders for the future."

The hallmark of USC Kaufman – as expressed in its motto "The New Movement" — is preparing students for the large umbrella of human movement that is encompassed in the word *dance* – where intersecting techniques, traditions and styles create new forms to be expressed in concert dance, filmed dance, and through new and traditional media, with a world view in which academic theory, studio practice and choreography are in a continuum from the performing arts to the commercial world.

The entire building is designed to support the ideas of this New Movement. For example, the 3,592-square-foot Performance Studio, the largest in the new Kaufman Dance Center, is equipped as a hub where dance research and innovation can materialize. Conceived under the concept of hybridity, the space is capable of transforming from a dance studio into a black box-like theater, and will include a cinematic large screen for screenings mirroring the hybrid skills of the dancers taught there.

The Performance Studio also features retractable seating for 140, high-definition video projection equipment, theatrical lighting designed in collaboration with renowned lighting designer Michael Korsch, and a full-length scrim, which descends from the room's pipe grid to the floor. Dancers can enter and exit unseen during performances through an external corridor that connects the space to upper-floor dressing rooms.

State-of-the-art floors and subfloors, made of Harlequin sprung marley, cushion the dancers' movements

and provide sure footing for the many styles of dance explored in the space. These floors are specially isolated so sound and vibrations from music and dancers' movements will not be heard from other nearby rooms; the studios are built so that their concrete floors do not touch the sidewalls or the slab foundation.

“This is the largest dance-dedicated complex on a private university campus,” said Jeffrey de Caen, Associate Dean for Operations. At the Kaufman Dance Center, students will have endless tools to experiment with different settings and engage in dialogue with other performing arts disciplines both on and off campus; even its courtyard can act as a non-traditional venue space.

The Performance Studio's large windows face Jefferson Avenue with a view of the new USC Village of residential colleges and retail spaces (completion fall 2017) directly across the street. USC Village, a \$700 million 15 acre development, is the University's largest capital construction project to date and one of the largest ever in South Los Angeles.

The Kaufman Dance Center is located on Watt Way near the university's five other art schools: the adjacent USC School of Cinematic Arts and USC Thornton School of Music, as well as USC Roski School of Art and Design, USC School of Dramatic Arts and The USC School of Architecture, also on Watt Way. The Kaufman Dance Center has many spaces for dance students to gather with students, faculty and colleagues from the other art schools to discuss ideas and concepts for both their course work and in creating performances.

Kaufman Dance Center also has unprecedented access to visiting dance companies in residence at the nearby Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center series in downtown Los Angeles, less than five miles from campus. Thanks to a unique partnership with that organization, each visiting dance company works with Kaufman students in master classes covering professional development and artistic performance. By the time USC Kaufman students graduate, they will have interacted personally with many of the world's leading dance professionals and their companies.

Already in the past year, students have received master classes from Alonzo King, Alonzo King LINES Ballet; Yuri Fateyev, the Mariinsky Ballet; Tiler Peck, New York City Ballet; Glenn Edgerton, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago; Chou Chang-ning, Taiwan's Cloud Gate Dance Theater; Silas Reiner teaching Merce Cunningham technique; and Hope Boykin of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Students have been taught excerpts from works by world-class choreographers and their company members, including Bill T. Jones, Martha Graham Dance Company, Alejandro Cerrudo and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. They have also observed rehearsal at Fox Television's *So You Think You Can Dance*. The spaces at the USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center will easily allow students to work directly with these professionals and their company members.

The Kaufman Dance Center will also host visiting companies offering intensives to both students and the general dance community. This summer, for example, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago holds a summer intensive conducted by Princess Grace Award-winning choreographer Robyn Mineko Williams, from August 1-12, for pre-professional (Level IV) 18-24 year old dancers. It is followed by The Gaga Summer Intensive, August 15-20, for which Batsheva Dance Company artistic director Ohad Naharin created the movement language, a combination of strength and flow, that he says creates “body builders with a soft spine.”

The Kaufman Dance Center is also home to the new USC Choreographic Institute, an international platform for ground-breaking initiatives in choreographic research, practice and mentorship at the intersection of movement, science, technology and media. The Institute, which will work closely with partner schools within USC, is advised by world-renown choreographer William Forsythe. This fall the institute will launch with a three-day summit held at the Kaufman Dance Center, in conjunction with “Fall for Forsythe” a monthlong celebration the work of William Forsythe.

Thus the Kaufman Dance Center, at once, becomes an integral part of Los Angeles' long history of dance

--- a history that includes Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Martha Graham, Busby Berkeley, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Hermes Pan, Agnes de Mille, Lester Horton, Bella Lewitzky, Harold and Fayard Nicholas, Jack Cole, Gene Kelly, Cyd Charisse, Debbie Reynolds, Michael Kidd, Gower Champion, Marge Champion, Alvin Ailey, Carmen De Lavallade, *American Bandstand*, Donald McKayle, Robert Joffrey, Onna White, Marc Breau, Dee Dee Wood, Danny Daniels, Gregory Hines, *Soul Train*, Michael Peters, Kenny Ortega, Lula Washington, Debbie Allen, Jacques Heim, Daniel Ezralow, Jamie King, Nygel Lythgoe, *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Dancing with the Stars*, Mandy Moore, Travis Wall, Benjamin Millepied, Spencer Liff, Misty Copeland, and Rachel Moore; all of whom have spent significant parts of their careers here – whether it be in film, television, music video, concert stage, modern, ballet, or musical theatre.

How the USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center Came To Be

To create the USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center, school leadership started with a blank slate -- a large, empty site, and complete control over the design, which expresses their vision for USC Kaufman.

To begin this process, deCaen, Associate Dean of Operations for USC Kaufman and the USC Thornton School of Music, who had overseen several major construction and renovation projects for music buildings on campus, put in more than a year of research planning this state-of-the-art dance center.

He examined each of the dozens of past projects mentioned by the six architectural firms bidding for the job. He visited dance buildings at four other universities, Southern California performance and rehearsal spaces used by dance companies large and small, and expansive performing arts venues, including The Music Center, Houston Ballet, and the Anvil Centre in Vancouver. He researched technical specifications and construction standards by speaking to construction managers and building maintenance directors at several locations, including Juilliard, the Alvin Ailey Citigroup Theater and New York City's Joyce Theater.

This deluge of information has resulted in USC creating a “palace for dance,” as Dean Cutietta calls it, that has been exhaustively thought out in terms of layout, construction features, electronics, sound isolation and finishes — all in service of the innovative, multidisciplinary dance curriculum adopted by the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance.

“The extensive research, superlative design, deeply committed consultant and contractor teams, and input from Gates, Cutietta and Kaufman have added up to an extraordinary building,” de Caen said. “The flowing interior design celebrates movement and the expanse provides one with a sense of lift, just as Glorya Kaufman intended.”

The Italian Collegiate Gothic exterior, juxtaposes a very modern and vibrant interior. The state-of-the-art facility houses dance studios each accented with a jewel-toned wall: topaz, amethyst, ruby, turquoise and sapphire. Avoiding 90-degree angles, the architects created a space in which many corners are replaced by curves. On the ground floor, the main hallway between four of the dance studios creatively mimic the shape of a dancer's leg en pointe. A sweeping grand staircase flows between the building's three levels.

With the intention of creating a warm, welcoming environment, the dance center features eye-catching, original details throughout its space. Entering through the main doors and into the lobby, the space incorporates Art Deco lighting fixtures, donated by Ms. Kaufman. Her portrait will hang in the landing of the undulating staircase. To the left of the main entrance, the “Christine Ofiesh Wall of Firsts” celebrates moments in the school's history, and will feature portraits including the first class of students, the first dean, and the first staff and faculty.

USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center and The New Movement

The new USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center has space for USC Kaufman's entire curriculum for The New Movement. Vice Dean Gates said, “The Kaufman Dance Center has the facility

and flooring to support the entire range of movement of concert and commercial dancing, and from ballet to street dancing. There is classroom space for dancers to receive the vibrant liberal arts education provided by the University of Southern California, among the best in the world, which can help develop dancers who have a depth of understanding about the human condition.”

Second, there is a new belief that artists do not create art “apart from” society but as “a part of” society. Conservatory quality dance instruction begins with a broader educational model that starts with the perspective of the human experience as a lens through which to view the world.

Third, USC Kaufman is grounded in the realities of the dance profession. Cutietta said, “And most importantly,” Dean Cutietta said, “we can help dancers learn how they can spend a lifetime in the field they love. The length of performing careers in dance is shortened by physical limitations. Understanding the means of staying healthy – the building includes a fitness zone -- will allow our students to prolong their performance careers, and understanding the workings of the industry will expand dancers’ job options far beyond the stage.”

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ABOUT THE USC GLORYA KAUFMAN SCHOOL OF DANCE

Founded in 2012 by a transformational gift by Glorya Kaufman, the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance combines artistic preeminence with industry access at one of the nation’s leading private universities. Since welcoming its inaugural class in fall 2015, USC Kaufman has hosted some of the leading artistic voices in dance. From world-renown faculty members to exclusive partnerships with cutting-edge dance companies, the USC Kaufman School of Dance is quickly becoming the premier hub for dance in Southern California. In fall 2016, the school’s vision will be realized in brick and mortar with the opening of the more than 54,000-square-foot Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center.

Learn more at kaufman.usc.edu